

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1 Claim 1 (cancelled):

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1 Claim 2 (cancelled):

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1 Claim 3 (cancelled):

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1 Claim 4 (cancelled):

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1 Claim 5 (cancelled):

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1 Claim 6 (cancelled):

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1 Claim 7 (cancelled):

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1 Claim 8 (cancelled):

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1 Claim 9 (cancelled):

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(c) a second locking mechanism provided at said second coupling end said second locking mechanism comprising a male coupling member and a female coupling member, said male coupling member positioned substantially between said mat body and said female coupling member such that said mat body, said male coupling member, and said female coupling member are horizontally in tandem.

**Claim 11 (cancelled):**

Claim 12 (original): The road mat of claim 10 wherein said male coupling members and said female coupling members have a substantially semi-circular shape.

Claim 13 (currently amended): The road mat of ~~claim 1~~ claim 10 wherein said male coupling members ~~are suitable to interact~~ to connect with said female coupling members of a successive mat body.

1 Claim 14 (currently amended): A road mat system comprising:

2 (a) at least one prior road mat and at least one successive road mat,  
3 each road mat comprising:

4 (i) a mat body having a first coupling end and a second  
5 coupling end;

6 (ii) a first locking mechanism provided at said first coupling end,  
7 said first locking mechanism comprising a male coupling  
8 member and a female coupling member, said male coupling  
9 member positioned substantially between said mat body and  
10 said female coupling member; and

11 (iii) a second locking mechanism provided at said second  
12 coupling end said second locking mechanism comprising a  
13 male coupling member and a female coupling member, said  
14 male coupling member positioned substantially between said  
15 mat body and said female coupling member; and

16 (b) said second locking mechanism of said prior road mat ~~suitable for~~  
17 ~~interlocking~~ interlocks with said first locking mechanism of said  
18 successive road mat.  
19

1 Claim 15 (original): The road mat system of claim 14 wherein said at least  
2 one prior road mat and said at least one successive road mat are substantially identical.  
3

1 Claim 16 (original): The road mat system of claim 14 wherein said first  
2 locking mechanism is a reciprocating mirror image of said second locking mechanism.  
3

1 Claim 17 (original): The road mat system of claim 14 wherein said male  
2 coupling members and said female coupling members have a substantially semi-circular  
3 shape.  
4

1           Claim 18 (currently amended): The road mat system of claim 14 wherein  
2   said male coupling members ~~are suitable to~~ interact with said female coupling members  
3   to connect successive road mats.  
4

1           Claim 19 (currently amended): The road mat system of claim 14 wherein:

- 2           (a)    said male coupling member of said second locking mechanism of  
3                said prior road mat ~~suitable~~ interacts with said female coupling  
4                member of said first locking mechanism of said successive road  
5                mat; and  
6           (b)    said female coupling member of said second locking mechanism of  
7                said prior road mat ~~suitable~~ interacts with said male coupling  
8                member of said first locking mechanism of said successive road  
9                mat.

10  
1           Claim 20 (previously presented): The road mat of claim 10 wherein said  
2   first locking mechanism is substantially parallel to said first coupling end and said  
3   second locking mechanism is substantially parallel to said second coupling end.  
4

1           Claim 21 (previously presented): The road mat of claim 10 wherein said  
2   first locking mechanism extends substantially the length of said first coupling end and  
3   said second locking mechanism extends substantially the length of said second  
4   coupling end.  
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1           Claim 22 (currently amended): The road mat system of claim 14 wherein  
2   said road mat system provides for dynamic rotation of the coupling ends in the vertical  
3   plane to allow for inconsistencies in the terrain without loss of coupling capability or  
4   strength.  
5

1 Claim 23 (previously presented): The road mat system of claim 14  
2 wherein said first locking mechanism is substantially parallel to said first coupling end  
3 and said second locking mechanism is substantially parallel to said second coupling  
4 end.

5  
1 Claim 24 (previously presented): The road mat system of claim 14  
2 wherein said first locking mechanism extends substantially the length of said first  
3 coupling end and said second locking mechanism extends substantially the length of  
4 said second coupling end.

5  
1 Claim 25 (currently amended): A road mat comprising:

2 (a) a mat body having a first coupling end and a second coupling end;

3 (b) a first locking mechanism provided at said first coupling end, said  
4 first locking mechanism comprising a male coupling member  
5 substantially parallel to said first coupling end and a female  
6 coupling member substantially parallel to said first coupling end,  
7 said mat body, said male coupling member, and said female  
8 coupling member positioned substantially horizontally in tandem;  
9 and

10 (c) a second locking mechanism provided at said second coupling end  
11 said second locking mechanism comprising a male coupling  
12 member substantially parallel to said first coupling end and a  
13 female coupling member substantially parallel to said first coupling  
14 end, said mat body, said male coupling member, and said female  
15 coupling member positioned substantially horizontally in tandem.  
16

1 Claim 26 (previously presented): The road mat of claim 25 wherein said  
2 first locking mechanism extends substantially the length of said first coupling end and

3 said second locking mechanism extends substantially the length of said second  
4 coupling end.

5  
1 Claim 27 (previously presented): The road mat of claim 25 wherein in  
2 relation to each coupling end, said male coupling members are positioned in tandem  
3 with said female coupling members at each coupling end.

4  
1 Claim 28 (previously presented): The road mat of claim 25 wherein said  
2 male coupling members and said female coupling members have a substantially semi-  
3 circular shape.

4  
1 Claim 29 (previously presented): The road mat of claim 25 wherein said  
2 male coupling members and said female coupling members provide for dynamic  
3 rotation of the coupling ends in the vertical plane to allow for inconsistencies in the  
4 terrain without loss of coupling capability or strength.

5  
1 Claim 30 (new): The road mat of claim 10 wherein said male coupling  
2 members and said female coupling members are C-shaped channel members.  
3